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ABSTRACT

A study investigated teachers' attitudes concerning the second year of the Reading/Writing Immersion (R/WI) project, which assisted early years teachers in the White Horse Plain School Division No. 20, Manitoba, Canada, to become more effective in working with students who were at-risk of failing to develop reading and writing performance goals. All 11 participants in the project completed or partially completed surveys. Results indicated that: (1) the location and overall quality of meetings were satisfactory; (2) overall, the materials and reading used in the study group phase of the project were useful; (3) site visits were either very useful or somewhat useful, and the visits were considered as important as other components of the project; (4) in most instances, the project was meeting participant expectations, and that participants were about equally split in believing that the time spent on the project was just about what they expected or somewhat more than they had expected; (5) participants were very satisfied with support provided by university staff members; (6) participants indicated that they had learned a number of new skills and were already using them in their classrooms; and (7) the addition of three workshop sessions on report writing provided a valuable experience for project participants. Recommendations include: continuation and expansion of the project; continuation of the study group meetings; continuation of site visits as an integral part of the project; and continuation of participants' assessment of student outcomes. (The survey instrument with tabulations of data for each question is attached.) (RS)

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ED 371 298

Reading/Writing Immersion:
A Decision Making Literacy Development Project

Teacher Survey

Year 2

June 28, 1994

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Note - * denotes "official" or funded members of the Project.

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Reading/Writing Immersion:
A Decision Making Literacy Development Project

Teacher Surveys
Year 2

Introduction

The Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training approved and funded the Reading/Writing Immersion (R/WI) Project for three schools in White Horse Plain School Division No. 20: (1) Bon Homme Hutterian Colony School; (2) St. Francois Xavier School; and (3) St. Laurent School. The school division provided money for release time for additional teachers from the three funded schools and two additional schools (i.e., Maxwell Hutterian Colony School and James Valley Hutterian Colony School) in order that they might also participate in the R/WI Project. The Project officially began in September 1992. R/WI was designed to assist Early Years teachers in becoming more effective in working with students who were "at-risk" of failing to develop the reading and writing performance goals. Since one of the purposes of R/WI was to promote literacy development at all grade levels in the participating schools, a resource teacher from each of the schools was identified by the school's principal to take part. In the participating schools, resource teachers function as collaborative, school-based consultants. It was envisioned that the consultative-collaborative nature of their role would serve to build an ethos, or climate for collective language arts efforts in each school. Collegial consultation efforts were perceived as one way of pooling and effectively multiplying the knowledge base and skills stemming from R/WI. In Year 2, the Project was expanded to include both Grades 1 and 2. A total of two Grade 1 teachers, one Grade 2 teacher, one Grade 3 teacher, four multi-year teachers, three resource teachers, and two Faculty of Education (University of Manitoba) staff members participated in the R/WI

Project during the 1993-94 school year. However, one of the teachers became ill in the middle of the school year and took a leave of absence from her position and the Project.

During the 1993-94 school year, R/WI was comprised of two components. First, a study group or workshop component, that took place between September 1993 and May 1994. In Year 1 these workshops lasted an entire day. However, at the request of the participants, in Year 2 all but one of the workshops were decreased from full-days to half-days so that more site visits could be carried out. As a result, there was one full-day workshop, and six half-day workshops held at the St. Francois Xavier Community School. These meetings involved the presentation and/or discussion of: (a) whole language issues; (b) procedures and materials related to the teaching of reading and writing skills; (c) the development reading and writing objectives; (d) the assessment of reading and writing skills; (e) classroom management strategies; (f) the effectiveness of procedures being tried in the classrooms; (g) Project report writing; (h) miscue analysis; and (i) other project related matters.

Second, a site visitation component took place between October 1993 and May 1994. By increasing the number of site visitations, it was possible to begin the visitations a month earlier than was possible in Year 1. In this component the Project participants established the goals and purposes for the site visits and observations. These included the University staff (1) observing the participants using Project strategies with the students they identified as being at-risk, (2) demonstrating instructional strategies, and (3) assessing student performance. This allowed the teachers to view the modeling of a variety of teaching techniques. The teachers were debriefed after each site visit. The observation sessions were also used to provide participants with constructive feedback regarding their instruction and to assist with the analysis of student performance.

Based on their experiences in Year 1, the three Project schools applied for and received funding for an additional six days of support from the two University staff members. These additional six days were divided up so that three days were allocated to site visits and three

days were allocated to report writing workshops. The six days were provided at the end of April and first part of May 1994.

An important aspect of the R/WI Project is that it was designed to operate as a collaborative model. That is, all of the participants were to work together to design the specific direction of the Project. The basic premise of the Project is that effective teachers are competent "decision makers" and that future professional growth is dependent on the ability of teachers to monitor or reflect on their teaching performance. Therefore, the study group or workshop component of this Project was not the traditional, lecture style university class. The Project participants established agendas, topics for discussion, book study sessions, book fairs, cooperative reporting and other joint activities. In these sessions the university personnel acted as facilitators. A second aspect of the collaborative approach was that it allowed each school to develop their own unique program based on the specific characteristics of their school community.

One funding condition was that this Project be evaluated. Therefore, an evaluation plan was designed and accepted by the Project's Management Committee. This plan called for a process evaluation (an evaluation of the implementation of the Project) during the Project's first year of operation (i.e., the 1992-93 school year), and for implementation and outcome evaluations (effects of the Project on the students) during the second and third years (i.e., school years 1993-94 and 1994-95). A two-part design was selected as it allowed for complete Project implementation prior to the assessment of student outcomes. University personnel were given the responsibility of carrying out the process evaluations and White Horse Plain Division No. 20 staff members were assigned responsibility for the outcome evaluations.

Year 2 Evaluation Method

The methodology used for the Year 2 process evaluation was a teacher survey. A teacher survey methodology was selected as it was the most economical method of providing detailed

information to the Student Support Branch, Manitoba Education and Training and White Horse Plain School Division No. 20.

Instrument

The purpose of the survey was to collect data about the processes used to accomplish the goals stipulated for Year 2 of the Project. It was designed by the University personnel, and was based on the survey that was designed and utilized in Year 1. The survey was made up of two parts and included multiple choice and open-ended questions. A two part survey was designed because the workshops on report writing were conducted in May 1994. That is, it was felt that if the June 15, 1994 report deadline was to be met, University staff could not wait until the middle of May 1994 to do data analysis and report writing. A copy of the Part A can be found in Appendix A, while Part B can be found in Appendix B.

Procedure

Since both "official" and "unofficial" members of the Project took part in the two major components of R/WI (i.e., the study group or workshop meetings and the site visits), all 11 participants were given a part A survey to complete at the April 14, 1994 group meeting. The participants were directed to take the survey away with them and compete it at their convenience. They were also asked not to discuss the survey with other participants and to return the survey within two weeks. Participants were provided pre-addressed envelopes for returning the completed surveys. Part B of the survey was handed out at the end of the last writing workshop held on May 19, 1994. However, since the resource teachers were not required to write reports (they were not responsible for the instruction of students involved in the Project) only the participants who had attended the writing workshop were given Part B to complete (9 of the 11 participants). Again, participants were asked not to discuss the survey with each other and to return the survey within two weeks in the pre-addressed envelopes that were provided.

As all responses were to remain confidential, the teachers were asked not to include their names on the surveys nor the return envelopes. Instructions on how to complete the survey, along with a phone number to call if they had any questions, were included on the survey. Part A took approximately one hour to complete while Part B took approximately 1/2 hour to complete.

Teacher Survey Results

All 11 of the Project participants, returned either a completed or partially completed survey. Of the 11 participants, 6 (54.5%) had participated in Year 1 and 5 (45.5%) were new to the Project. Nine (81.8%) of the participants were official members of the Project while 2 (18.2%) were unofficial members. Therefore, in order to maintain confidentially, the data was not presented by "official - unofficial" classifications. Unless a difference was found between individuals who had been in the Project for two years and those who were in it for only one year, only total group data will be presented. To facilitate the reader's understanding of the survey data, the authors organized the results into seven topic areas.

Meetings

At the end of Year 1 it was recommended that fewer full-day meetings be held and that this extra time be use for school visitations. Therefore, in Year 2 a total of one full-day and six half-day R/WI Project meetings were held. Section I (Part A) of the survey asked the participating teachers to respond to six general questions regarding the location and overall quality of the meetings.

1. The meetings for the Reading/Writing Immersion Program have been held at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School. How do you feel about this location?

On Part A of the April 1994 survey, 8 (72.7%) of the respondents stated that the "location is fine", 2 (18.2%) reported that the "location was too far from my home school", and 1 (9.1%) reported that it did "not matter" where the meetings were held (see Appendix A).

2. Rate the room in which the meetings have been held in by <u>circling</u> the most appropriate response.

All eleven respondents rated the meeting room's cleanliness and lighting as being "very good". Ten (90.9%) of the respondents rated the size of the room as being "very good" while 1 (9.1%) respondent rated room size as being "good". A total of 4 (36.4%) respondents rated the room's temperature as being "very good", 5 (45.5%) rated it as "good" and 2 (18.2%) rated it as "poor".

3. In your opinion, how would you rate the overall organization of the meetings held so far?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Six (27.3%) of the of the 11 respondents stated that the group meetings had been "very well organized", 4 (36.4%) indicated that they had been "well organized" and 1 (9.1%) indicated that the meetings had been "poorly organized". In the comments/suggestion portion of the question the following responses were provided:

- "Too much repetition and off task."
- "I wish more people would have brought work samples and ideas to share. Even when we were told to, people didn't. Maybe if it was made mandatory there would be a greater effort put forth."
- "Sometimes, too much time was spent on one area, such as the Miscue Analysis which, I feel, could have been discussed in a much shorter time."
- "Not always ended up with learning of specific but were still important info. provided."

4. Given that one of the main goals of this Project is that a collaborative approach be utilized, how satisfied are you with the opportunities you have had with regards to input into the agendas of the meetings? Comments/suggestions for improvements.

Of the 11 respondents, 10 (90.9%) reported being "very satisfied" with their opportunities for input regarding meeting agendas. One (9.1%) respondent stated that they were "somewhat dissatisfied" their opportunities for input. The one dissatisfied respondent commented that -- "Nothing new. Too much time taken up with diagnostics and not enough time with strategies. Writing was supposed to be our focus."

5. When you have made suggestions with regards to the meeting agendas, did you feel that your suggestions were given adequate consideration? Comments/suggestions.

Eight (72.7%) of the respondents reported that the suggestions they made were given "very adequate consideration", 2 (18.2%) stated their suggestions were given "adequate consideration" and 1 (9.1%) noted that their suggestions were "were considered, but not adequately". None of the respondents provided a comment or suggestion.

6. Based on suggestions received at the end of Year One, this year's group meetings were a half-day long rather than a full-day and more time was given to school visits. Overall, how would you rate this change?

Of the 11 respondents, 9 (81.8%) reported that they "liked the half-day meetings" and 2 (18.2%) responded with an "N/A". When asked to comment, the following statements were provided:

- "I can't compare the two, because I wasn't here last year. But I would think that half day sessions and more time to on site visits would be better if you are receiving visits."
- "The school allowed us to work on the project for the second half. Therefore, suggestions, ideas, or resources could be investigated immediately -- very beneficial. Thanks."
- "I appreciated the school visits."
- "We waste too much time on the road. The other 1/2 day is not great for anything."
- "I found the whole-day meetings were too long to sustain my attention."
- "The half day was good for material presentation but in my situation because of distance the other half day was basically wasted."

Summary. Combining the results of the six questions on the group meetings, it can be concluded that, overall, the participants were satisfied with the location of the meetings, the room in which the meetings were held, the organization of the meetings and their opportunities for input into the meeting agendas. It was also found that reducing the meetings to half-days, and increasing the number of school visits was positively received by the respondents. Written responses did not indicate any patterns of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

A comparison of the teacher survey data on meetings for Years 1 and Year 2 did not reveal any major differences. For both Years 1 and 2, participants had rated the group meetings as a positive experience.

Materials and Readings

As was the case in Year 1, the study group component held at the St. Francois Xavier Elementary School in Year 2 was designed to discuss issues, attitudes and skills related to the teaching of reading and writing. It was in this component that the majority of instructional procedures were presented and discussed. As part of this component, a variety of materials/readings were provided to the R/WI participants. To assess these materials and readings, questions 7 through 14 were included on the survey (see Section II - Materials/Readings, Appendix A).

**7. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the reading material that have been provided to you?
Comments/suggestions.**

Analysis of the teacher survey results for question 7 revealed that 5 (45.5%) of the participants rated the quality of the reading materials presented by University staff as being of a "very high quality" and that 5 (45.5%) rated them as of a "high quality". One (9.1%) respondent did not provide an answer to this question. However, that respondent did provide the first comment listed below.

- "What reading materials? There was nothing specifically new this year. The Pippin Books were interesting reading, but nothing new and we never really discussed the info."
- "Not made aware of what is available at the school."

8. Do you feel that the reading material provided to you thus far has presented: mostly new information, a half-and-half mixture of new and old information or mostly old information that I already knew?

The majority of the participants (9 or 81.8%) responded that the material presented to them was "a half-and-half mixture of new and old information". One respondent (9.1%) reported that "mostly new information" was provided to them and 1 (9.1%) responded that the

material included "mostly old information that I already knew". Follow-up analysis indicated that the respondent who reported that the information was "mostly new" was new to the Project in Year 2, while the respondent who reported "mostly old information" had taken part in Year 1.

9. Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of the reading material provided to you?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Nine (81.8%) of the participants stated that the reading materials were "very useful", 1 (9.1%) indicated that they were "somewhat useful" and 1 (9.1%) stated that they were "not very useful". Two of the four comments made by the respondents indicated that they would have liked more time to read, discuss and absorb the material. The four comments were:

- "No new strategies provided."
- "After being in it for a year, I was able to understand & compliment theories/materials with a much improved confidence."
- "We need more time to absorb & time to read."
- "I would like more discussion and comments about professional materials we have read."

10. How would you rate the amount of information that has been provided to you?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Five (45.5%) of the 11 respondents stated that the amount of information provided was "the right amount", 1 (9.1%) stated that the amount was "just a little too much material to be read between sessions", and 4 (36.4%) stated that they "could have dealt with a little more material between sessions". One (9.1%) stated that "far too little in the way of material/readings were provided". The following "comments/suggestions for improvement" were made:

- "We, I thought, were to concentrate on writing this year."
- "It is difficult to answer. Some weeks there was a fairly large amount of reading material. At other times there was a minimal amount to read or none at all."

**11. How adequate was the University Staff follow-up to the reading material (i.e., willingness to discuss/explain ideas presented in the materials/readings)?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.**

When asked to rate University staff's follow-up on the reading material, 9 (81.8%) participants rated it as being "very adequate", 1 (9.1%) rated it as "adequate" and 1 (9.1%) rated it as "not at all adequate". The respondent who did not find the follow-up by University staff to be adequate provided the first comment listed below.

- "Perhaps I was not "present", but I don't remember any assigned readings."
- "Impressive willingness to give assistance."

12. Do you feel that the reading and other professional materials given to you in Year Two covered the topic areas that you thought would be covered when you started the Program in September 1993?

Of the 11 participants, 5 (45.5%) reported that they thought there were "very few surprises" with regard to the topic areas covered by the reading materials. Two (18.2%) participants reported that "there were a number of areas" covered by the reading materials that they did not expect, and 2 (18.2%) reported that there were "a lot of areas" covered that they did not expect. Two (18.2%) participant did not respond to the question. Even though Project participants were not ask for additional comments, three did so anyway. These comments are as follows:

- "Personally I thought too much time was spent on miscues; but it was the decision of the majority. I found the review beneficial."
- "Did not know what to expect."
- "Because I wasn't part of the Project the year before I didn't know what to expect."

**13. Were there topic areas you would have liked to have received reading material on, but did not?
If yes, what were those topic areas?**

Six (54.5%) of the respondents replied "yes" to the question and 5 (45.5%) replied "no". The six who replied "yes" provided these written comments:

- "More and different strategies to help "at-risk kids". I thought our focus was to be writing, not reading miscue analysis."

- "Specific strategies to meet goals, because I did not have the advantage of on-site visits. The testing ideas we were given were excellent, but strategies to solve problems were probably part of the on-site visits."
- "Perhaps some new teaching strategies."
- "I would have liked more material on teaching different reading strategies and also information on how to detect a child's best learning style."
- "But not because there was any wasted time."
- "I would have liked more specific strategies to try and meet certain needs."

One participant who answered the question "no" supplied the comment "I'm anticipating receiving the student - led conference materials."

14. Given that this is a collaborative Project, did you feel that you could suggest reading material for the group?
Comments/suggestions

Nine (81.8%) participants replied "yes" to the question and 2 (18.2%) responded "no". Follow-up analysis of the data indicated that the two respondents who said "no" were individuals who were new to the Project in Year 2. The first two "comments/suggestions" listed below were from those two respondents. From their comments it can be seen that the fact that they were new to the Project, and new to teaching, may have affected their comfort level with making suggestions. That is, being new they may have been unsure of what they could or should suggest as readings.

- "As a newcomer, I was not always sure of the group direction. And as a first year teacher I didn't have a lot of background information and experience to suggest. This was more of a learning rather than a collaborative experience for me."
- "From the beginning I wasn't sure of our direction. This is probably because I was new this year as well as being a first year teacher."
- "However, I don't think it would have the breadth and range that Drs. Bravi & Madak have consistently brought to the meetings."

Summary. The findings of this section on materials/readings indicated that, overall, the participants thought that the readings: (a) were of a high quality; (b) provided new information and reviewed old information; (c) contained useful information; and (d) presented few surprises in terms of the topic areas covered. Also, the large majority of the participants felt

that the follow-up to the material provided by University staff was very adequate. Finally, given that one of the main goals of this Project is to develop a collaborative relationship among all participants, it is important to note that 81% of the individuals who responded to the survey thought that they were able to suggest materials/readings to the group.

When Year 2 results were compared to Year 1 results, the only difference found was that in Year 2 four respondents felt that a bit more information could have been presented to them each week. In Year 1 none of the respondents felt that they could handle more information. While it might be expected that new participants to the Project would be less likely to want more information, follow-up analysis indicated that only two of the four respondents were new members in Year 2.

Site Visits

During Year 2 of R/WI, University staff visited each official Project participant's classroom on at least six different occasions during the year. The classroom of the one of the three unofficial Project members was visited twice.

As was the case in Year 1, Year 2 visits were usually a half-day in length, but on several occasions more time was spent. What occurred during school visits was typically dictated by teacher requests. Typical school visit activities were: (a) observations of the entire class or individual students; (b) assessment of individual student performance; (c) consultation on a variety of topics; and (d) the demonstration of instructional or assessment techniques. Each visitation ended with the University staff meeting with the participants and providing information about teacher requests. In addition, suggestions were often made about matters other than those requested by the teachers. At some sites, the University staff also met with the principal and other staff members regarding matters related to the Project.

Questions 15 through 19 were designed to assess the visitation portion of the Project (see Appendix A). Given that visits were only carried out for the eight teachers (seven official and one unofficial participants), three respondents consistently did not provide answers to

questions 15 through 19. Of these three respondents, one was likely a resource teacher who did not have a classroom to visit and two were unofficial members who did not receive visits.

**15. How helpful were observations/suggestions made during the school visits in focusing the intent of the Program?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.**

Five (45.5%) of the respondents thought that the site visits were "very useful" and 3 (27.3%) believed them to be "somewhat useful". Three (27.3%) participants did not respond to the question. As stated above, the non respondents most likely included one resource teacher and two unofficial participants. Responses to the "comments/suggestions for improvement" section of the question produced the following:

- "I don't have a classroom. So I did not answer #15 - 19."
- "Teacher be freed to debrief; without handling the class at the same time. Written questions & objectives & strategies given to Dr. B. prior to lesson -- focus on these during debriefing."
- "My room was not visited per se as mine was not the target group."
- "As of now I haven't been visited at my school."

**16. How helpful were the school visits in assisting you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.**

Five (45.5%) respondents reported that the site visits were "very useful" in assisting them to make connections between workshop material and teaching practice and 3 (27.3%) felt that the visits were "somewhat useful". Three (27.3%) participants did not respond to the question. Again, the non respondents may have been one participating resource teacher and two unofficial members who were not visited. Only one of the 11 respondents provided a comment for this question.

- "But at times I'm still very confused."

**17. Overall, when comparing all of the components of the Reading/Writing Immersion Project (i.e., sessions at the St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and school visits) during Year Two, how important were the school visits made by Gerry and Paul?
Comments/suggestions.**

Three (27.3%) of the respondents rated the site visits as "the most important component" of the Project and 4 (36.4%) others rated the visits as "equal in importance" to the other components of the Project. One (9.1%) participant felt the visits were "not as important" as other Project components and 3 (27.3%) did not respond to the question. The following comments and suggestions were made:

- "Since I was in the Project unofficially in Year One, I regarded these visits as an opportunity to have Dr. B. observe me "in-action". This then would help me know if I had indeed implemented the theory appropriately, effectively & efficiently."
- "You are able to be more specific regarding your own students."

**18. Compared to Year One, do you feel that the increase in the number of school visits was a good decision?
Comments/suggestions.**

Of the eight participants who responded to this question, 3 (27.3%) replied "do not know" because they were not part of the Project in Year 1 and 5 (45.5%) replied "yes". Two of the respondents provided a comment. The comments made were as follows:

- "I was a part of Year One, but did not have school visits."
- "I feel it is important for those who are in the project for their first year."

19. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add about the school visits?

Three (27.3%) participants responded to the question. The comments or concerns were as follows:

- "I would like to see all Project members in one school visited at one time. % of time with each teacher could vary. During debriefing all teachers would benefit from "good" points, "improvements" as well as adding other insights to the strategies, students & become aware of strength of a student that could be their's in another year."
- "I was very comfortable with the school visits. They were done in a very non-threatening way. Never did I feel that my teaching methods were being criticized or evaluated."

- "Make it required that teacher's present in written form exactly what it is they ask Drs. Bravi & Madak to observe, assist & comment , in advance."

Summary. All respondents stated that the site visits were either "very useful" or "somewhat useful" and the vast majority thought that the visits were "as important" as other components of the Project or "the most important" component. It was also found that those respondents who had been in the Project in Year 1 felt that the decision to increase the number of school visits in Year 2 was a good one. The majority of the few written comments that were made were positive in nature. It is likely that one resource teacher and two unofficial Project members represented the majority of the non respondents in this section and that this was due to the fact that they were not observed during site visits.

Finally, when the Year 2 results were compared to Year 1 results, it was found that they were almost identical. The only difference between the two years concerned the fact that in Year 2 participants did not request that the number of site visits be increased. Therefore, it would appear that increasing the number of site visits in Year 2 had addressed the concerns expressed by Project participants in the Year 1 evaluation.

Project Expectations

Five questions in this section attempted to examine how closely Project (a) matched expectations of what it would be, (b) utility, (c) confidence in reaching expectations, and (d) time expenditure matched participant expectancies (see questions 20-24, Appendix A). Finally, one question asked them for additional comments or suggestions about the amount of time taken by the Project.

20. At this point in time how similar is the Project to what you expected it to be? If it is not what you thought, how is it different?

Seven (63.6%) of the respondents to the question indicated that the Project was "very close" to what they thought it would be, 2 (18.2%) stated it was "somewhat close" to what they thought it would be and 2 (18.2%) noted that it was "not al all close" to what they thought it would be. Follow-up analysis of the data indicated that the participants who found the

Project to differ from what they expected were the new members. Those who had participated in the Project in Year 1 were more likely to indicate that it was "very close" to what they had expect. There were two comments about how the Project differed from their expectancies for it:

- "I had no information on the course before I started, other than it would be very useful for me to take. (and it was extremely useful!)"
- "It is not different, I just wasn't sure what to expect."

21. Is the Project turning out to be as useful to you as you thought it would be? Comments/suggestions for improvements.

Seven (63.6%%) respondents stated that "yes" the Project was "very useful" and 3 (27.3%) indicated that it was "somewhat useful" to them. One (9.1%) participant replied that the Project was "not very useful" to them. The respondent who did not feel that the Project was very useful commented that "Need more strategies, new techniques in working with 'at-risk' students." The one additional comment made by a respondent was:

- "It has made me very aware of my objectives, how I go about to achieve them and making my results or achievements measurable."

22. At this point, how confident are you that your expectations for the Project will be reached? Why or why not?

Five (45.5%) respondents felt that they were "somewhat confident" about having their expectations met and 3 (27.3%) stated that they were "very confident" that their expectations would be reached. One (9.1%) indicated that they were "not very confident" about having their expectations met and 2 (18.2%) participants did not respond to the question. The respondent who was not very confident that their expectations for the Project would be reached commented "Strategies, strategies, strategies, please."

The following are participant comments made by those who felt "somewhat confident" about having their expectations met:

- "My job may change. Division pull out backing, I am concerned for Year Four. How supportive is division? Will they expect this all to take place on teachers' own time or will they still devote paid time somewhat?"

- "My class is too great a load for any 1 teacher - I often feel somewhat overwhelmed."
- "There were a lot of outside interferences that may have hampered the results."

The following are participant comments made by those who were "very confident" that their expectations for the Project would be reached:

- "The expectation that this course would be useful was definitely reached. But, my own goals for my students, in a lot of tests won't be reached -- Too many goals, too little class time, trying to work in all educational aspects with limited resources including lack of experience."
- "The Project has helped me become specific with goals and objectives."

Finally, one of the respondents who did not respond to the first half of the question reported:

- "I didn't have any definite expectations for the Project. What I decided on for my specific expectations for my students in the Project I am confident we strived hard to reach. That is showing growth."

23. The time I spent on the Project this year was more or less than I expected?

Four (36.4%) of the respondents noted that they had spent "a bit more time" than they had expected. Three (27.3%) participants thought they had spent "just about the amount of time" they had expected and 1 (9.1%) felt she had spent "much more time" than expected. Three (18.2%) participants reported that they had spent "a bit less than" they had expected. No differences were found between first time participants and participants who had been in the Project for two years.

24. Do you have any additional comment/concerns/suggestions to make regarding the amount of time taken up by this Project in Year Two?

Only one comment/concern/suggestion was made -- "I was very interested and just wanted to savor all I could."

Summary. In most instances the Project was meeting participant expectations. The majority of the participants felt that the Project was very close to what they thought it would be, that it was turning out to be very useful to them and that they were confident that their

expectations for the Project would be reached. Those who expressed concerns about knowing what the Project was about, were more likely to have been first time Project members.

Finally, the participants were about equally split in believing that the time spent on the Project was just about what they expected or somewhat more than they had expected. Three individuals felt that they had a bit less time than they expected.

When a comparison between Year 1 and Year 2 results was conducted, it was found that participants in Year 2 were more likely to report that the Project was very useful to them. The only other difference found between Year 1 and Year 2 responses was that while none of the participants in Year 1 reported that the Project took less time than they expected, three participants in Year 2 reported that they spent a bit less time than they expected.

Support For The Project

The two questions in this section attempted to acquire participant ratings of (a) the university staff members' participation in the Project and (b) the support provided by their school's administration (see questions 25a-j and 26 in Appendix A).

25. In your opinion, how would you rate the University Staff in the areas listed below? Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Ten (90.9%) respondents thought University staff members "always" (a) were approachable, (b) treated them as professionals (c) were willing to answer their questions and (d) empathized with the problems they had to deal with in their classrooms. Nine (81.8%) indicated that the University staff members "always" (a) valued their opinions and (b) suggested rather than dictated or criticized. Eight (72.7%) noted that they "always" (a) looked for and encouraged their input, (b) made suggestions that were useful to them and (c) helped them to feel more confident about what they did in their classrooms. Finally, seven (63.6%) thought that University staff "always" tried to make the Project challenging to them.

All other responses indicated that the University staff members "sometimes" did all of the above things. Follow-up analysis indicated that participants who had taken part in the Project for two years were more likely to have reported that University staff "sometimes" (a) made

useful suggestions to them and (b) tried to make the Project challenging to them than were first time members.

Only one comment was made -- "They try to make the Project challenging in a good way."

26. In your opinion, how would you rate the support being provided to this Program from your school's administrator(s)? Comments/suggestions for improvements.

Of the 11 respondents, 9 (81.8%) indicated that they thought their administrator had provided "very good" support to the R/WI Project and 2 (18.2%) indicated that "good" support had been provided. The following comments and/or suggestions for improvement were provided:

- "At times I wonder how much they actually know about what is going on. Do they have a copy of the goals, do they know/observe the teacher's implementation of them? If at times we try 1 method only to throw it out & re-do it a different way do they understand or criticize?"
- "I don't feel there was enough communication between the principal and the classroom teacher. It seemed that budget and other administrative issues were only discussed with the participating resource teacher. Support from the administrator was good, however, I question whether he was truly interested in the project. I was never asked any questions, etc."
- "There was insufficient carry over from the previous personnel in our school (i.e., teacher & resource involved at our school)."
- "In our situation we did not see the carry over that we should have had from school."

Summary. In general, Project participants seemed very satisfied with the support provided by the University staff members. Furthermore, all of the respondents indicated that they thought their school administrator provided either "very good" or "good" support for the Project. The comments indicated that some participants were concerned about their administrator's understanding of the Project goals or communication of these. In addition, some felt the carry over from Year 1 to Year 2 could have been done more efficiently.

A comparison between Year 1 and Year 2 for University support indicated only small differences. In both cases, the majority of the respondents reported that University staff

"always" provided support in the ten areas questioned. Concerning principal support, Year 2 results indicated an improvement in principal support. In Year 1 five of the participants rated their principal as having provided poor support for the Project, while in Year 2 all of the participants rated their principal as providing "very good" or "good" support. However, the written comments did point out that there were still some problems associated with communication and carry over of the Project from Year 1 to Year 2.

Program Usefulness and Final Comments

The final section of the survey asked questions that examined the overall usefulness of the Project and participant suggestions for improving it. This section was composed of five questions (questions 27a-f to 31) which can be found in Appendix A.

27. Based on your experiences with the Project, how would your rate the following items? Comments.

All 11 (100.0%) participants stated that: (a) they were trying out some of the ideas and instructional techniques introduced by the Project and (b) they had already adopted some of these ideas and techniques as part of their instructional program. Ten (90.9%) reported that the Project had helped them to improve their teaching skills. A total of 8 (72.7%) reported that the information presented to them so far had been "very useful", 2 (18.2%) reported that the information provided to them so far had been "useful" and 1 (9.1%) reported that it had been "somewhat useful". The results indicated that 8 (72.7%) of the respondents reported that they were 100% certain that they will make changes to what they do in the classroom, while 3 (27.3%) stated that they were "85% certain" they would make changes. When asked if they had noticed changes in their students' performance, 8 (72.7%) stated that they have already "noticed many positive changes" and 3 (27.3%) reported that they had noticed "a few positive changes"

None of the participants reported that: (a) the Project had not been useful; (b) they had not adopted any of the ideas or instructional techniques provided in by the Project; (c) they had not seen positive changes in their students' performance; nor (d) they had not tried any of the

instructional techniques presented. Only 1 (9.1%) participant thought that the Project had not helped them to improve their teaching skills.

Follow-up analysis indicated that participants who had been in the Project for two years were apt to be less positive in their responses to the questions on (a) usefulness of the information provided so far, (b) their certainty about making changes to what they do in the classroom, and (c) with regards to seeing positive changes in the performance of their students than were first time participants. While the..e differences were not large, we felt that they should be pointed out to the reader.

The following comments were made:

- "Those changes that I have made are from last year's time, not from this year."
- "Many positive changes have already been made."
- "Just moved down to Primary -- given this appointment is much better than taking standard university courses to gain experience & knowledge in this area."
- "It has helped me to decide how & to what minimal level I would like at-risk students in my class, to attain."
- "But a person has to want to change and work hard at it."

28. Name/describe some changes that you have made in your classroom during Year Two that are a result of this Project.

Ten (90.9%) participants described 19 changes that were a direct result of the Project. The changes are as follows:

- "I don't have a classroom."
- "Teaching toward more specific goals and letting the students know the goals we are trying to achieve. Basic goals are shared. We have a direction to go in to get where we want to be. I have used specific class motivations, like charting their growth visually. I have given them ownership of some of the goals, (reading & Dolch words) which they enjoy. To get a better understanding of stories, we have participated in involvement in play time, puppet shows and performing plays, and in re-telling."
- "More writing -- a wider range of writing classes. Attempting to tie parents into the equation of their child. i.e., Reading logs, writing letters, more published stories."
- "1. Objective writing. I have written objectives in place that help me to focus my teaching on specific skills, etc.

2. Testing & data collection: This has become an ongoing thing for me. I am trying to be more organized in my collection of data.
3. Analyzing data: I am able to identify students having difficulty in a certain area, and make quicker decisions as to how to re-teach that skill.
4. Peer teaching: I have found that I tend to let students explain their thought processes to each other more so now."

- "Objectives for special needs students (short and long-term)."

- "I was able to purchase more library books for the students and have re-arranged my classroom library to make books more accessible to the students. This has encouraged the home reading program also."

- "More emphasis has been put on reading & testing the reading. I have become a better evaluator - my evaluation tools & skills have improved - data is more reliable & not so subjective - more imperical evidence has been gathered."

- "1) Working more with small groups.
  2) Targeting specific areas of weakness within those groups.
  3) Using different methods to establish baselines.
  4) Do more reading miscue analysis.
  5) More oral retelling of stories.
  6) Using information from #'s 4 & 5 to make improvements in reading."

- "- Evaluate and recorded results much more efficiently.
  - used assessment as on going process.
  - did more 1 on 1 teaching again.
  - I used more behavioral objectives to see my other goals met."

- "Although I was not a part of year one, the project helped me with setting up my evaluation process."

To provide some consistency with the Year 1 report, the items listed above were classified in the four categories of (a) objectives and goals, (b) assessment and evaluation, (c) general instructional changes, and (d) specific instructional changes adopted. It is noteworthy that (a) the same number of changes were reported in both Year 1 and Year 2 (19), (b) in Year 2 7 (36.8%) of the changes reported were related to the specification and assessment of student performance (in Year 1 it was 10 of 19), (c) 5 (26.8%) were related to specific instructional changes adopted, (d) 4 (21.1%) were related to objectives and goals, and (e) 3 (15.8%) changes were classified as general instructional changes. These results, therefore, overlap a great deal with the results provide by the Year 1 evaluation.

29. If you could change one thing about the Project, what would it be?

Ten (90.9%) of the 11 participants mentioned 10 changes they would make in the Project. The changes are as follows:

- "I would like more time spent on learning new strategies to help students with the reading/writing process. A re-hash of the previous year's info. is not a valid use of my time."
- "I think that on-site visits are very important because each class has its own unique situations that can't be dealt with in the group. It would be nice if the time and money could be found for everyone to benefit from this."
- "Increased time for both theory and the practical that is observed. Observed in this manner (non-authority expert - - re: teacher evaluation within division) you feel free to attempt things that have/are problem areas. You don't have to "set-up" the situation so it works well. More of this is a good way to expand your strengths & minimize weakness."
- "I would change the role of the resource teachers. I'm not even sure what their job is. Taking minutes at meetings? Going to the management meetings? I don't find them helpful in my classroom situation. I've learned to deal with learning problems on my own."
- "Determine a Divisional Co-ordinator for the Project (not necessarily an administrator)."
- "The distance we need to travel should be equalized for all."
- "Nothing."
- "I would like to have more 'hands-on' activities at the workshops. For example, let's do a reading miscue or role play a 'child led conference'."
- "I would just love to spend an entire year just studying the various aspects of reading and become more proficient in teaching strategies."
- "I would like to see the on site visits take place first. Discuss specific strategies, then be able to discuss with the group what you did and how it went."

Three of the 10 comments were general comments related to the importance of the site visits. One participant suggested that the site visits take place before the study sessions, one suggested increased discussion time and one suggested that even the unofficial members be able to have site visits. Two other participants suggested that additional teaching strategies be presented to participants in the areas of reading and writing. The remaining suggestions were making changes to the role of the resource teachers in the Project, adding a Divisional co-

ordinator for the Project, that the distance participants had to travel to attend the study sessions be equalized for everyone, and providing more 'hands on activities' as part of the study group sessions.

When a comparison of suggestions made was carried out for Year 1 and Year 2, only one similarity was found. This similarity involved the stated importance of the site visits. However, Year 1 participants were more specific in their recommendations. That is, they expressed the desire to have the number of site visits increased while Year 2 comments appear to be more general in nature. The remaining suggestions did not overlap at all.

30. Given what has taken place between the start of the Project and now, do you have any suggestions that you have not already made earlier in this survey for improving the Reading/Writing Immersion Project? If so, what are they?

Four (36.4%) participants provided additional comments. Two of these five individuals stated that they had no further suggestions to make for improving the Project. Therefore, only two suggestions for improvement were actually made. The suggestions are as follows:

- "I feel that some teachers involved with the project felt or are still feeling like they were "forced" into participating. I am guessing that this is why some people don't bring work samples or discuss their students at the meetings."

  "I don't think that the administrators were very open about this project from the beginning. Maybe these feelings could have been avoided if the teachers had been given a chance to decide for themselves whether they would participate or not."

- "There should be time for teachers to observe and consult with one another in classroom settings."

- "None."

- "None!"

When a comparison of Year 1 and Year 2 responses was made, the main difference found was that fewer comments were provided to this question in Year 2. In Year 1 10 comments/suggestions were made while only two were made in Year 2. However, it was found that the two suggestions made in Year 2 had also been made in Year 1. The most common theme in Year 1 was that there was a need to provide participants with a more adequate introduction to the Project. The suggestions made in Year 2, however, added the

comment that some teachers may have been forced into taking part in the Project. Finally, in last year's results, there were also a number of comments related to increasing the opportunities for participants to visit each other's classrooms.

31. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add, but haven't been asked?

Only two additional comments were provided by participants to this question, and one of them was that they had nothing further to add. The comments are as follows:

- "I'd like to thank the Division for allowing myself & others to benefit from this Project in addition to the Provincially funded teachers."
- "No!"

Compared to Year 1, far fewer comments were made in Year 2 (7 participants in Year 1, 2 in Year 2).

Summary. A large majority of the participants indicated that they had learned a number of new skills and were already using them in their classrooms. The two most common changes reported were the utilization of more assessment and varied assessment strategies, and the utilization of different classroom teaching strategies (e.g., small group work; peer teaching; oral retelling of stories; etc.). Participants also indicated that the Project had resulted in an improvement in their teaching skills and that they had observed a number of positive changes in their students' performance. Comments made by the participants also reaffirmed the perceived importance of the site visitations to the success of the Project.

In Year 2 fewer comments were made regarding suggested changes to the Project. A large number of participants either made no comment about change or stated that they felt no change was needed. Some suggestions that were made included (a) spending more group session time on new reading and writing strategies, (b) the need for more adequate participant introduction to the Project, (c) more hands on activities in the group sessions, (d) changing the role of the resource teachers in the Project, and (e) adding a Divisional co-ordinator to oversee the Project.

The Report Writing Process

During the first year of the R/WI Project the teachers were responsible for writing Project Implementation Plans for Year 2 and Student Outcome Reports. The Project Implementation Plans were used as part of the submission to the Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training for Year 2 funding. In Year 1, Student Outcome Reports were in-house documents and viewed as trial runs for the reports that are to be written in Years 2 and 3 of the Project. In Year 2 teachers were responsible to provide Student Outcome Reports to both the Division administration and the Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training.

University staff provided the Project participants with materials and instruction related to report writing. Time was spent during study group sessions and site visits discussing how to assess students and how to collect the data for their Student Outcome Reports. In addition, three full-day report writing sessions were added to the number of group sessions. These report writing days took place on the 5th., 10th., and 19th. of May 1994. As part of these three days, participants made use of the computer lab at St. Francois Xavier School to write their reports. University staff assisted participants with the organization of their data, the display of the data and the writing of conclusions. The three days also provided participants the opportunity to share and discuss their reports with each other and the University staff members.

In order to evaluate the writing study group sessions, a short survey was designed by the University staff. The survey contained a total of seven questions (see Teacher Survey - Part B, Appendix B). These questions had been used in Year 1 to assess the assistance participants received in the first year of the Project in report writing. As stated above, the survey was handed out to the participants at the end of the third day on 19 May 1994.

Since only the classroom teachers were required to write reports, not all 11 of the Year 2 participants attended the report writing sessions. Therefore, surveys were given out only to the

9 participants who attended the writing sessions. A total of 8 (88.9%) participants returned a completed or partially completed survey. Reminder phone calls were made to all participants during the first week in June. When only 8 surveys were received by 10 June 1994, the decision was made to analyze the data and complete the final report.

Of the 8 participants who completed Part B, 6 (75.0%) were official members of the Project and 5 (62.5%) were in their first year of the Project. Given that initial data analysis found no differences among first and second year participants, the data was presented as a single group. In order to maintain confidentially, the data was not presented by "official -- unofficial" classifications. The results of Part B are presented in Appendix B.

1. How helpful were the University staff in assisting you in writing your final school report? Comments/suggestions:

All 8 (100.0%) of the respondents indicated that the University staff members had been "very helpful" in assisting them with report writing. Two of the respondents made the following comments:

- "It was well guided & well followed."
- "The outline was very helpful. Having Paul at the school for all three days was also very helpful."

When the above results were compared to Year 1, it was found that Year 2 participants rated the helpfulness of the assistance they received much higher. This improved rating could be a result of two factors. First, Year 2 included three workshop sessions that only dealt with report writing while in Year 1 no such workshops were conducted. During Year 1 the writing of the reports was discussed, but this discussion was spread out over the course of the year and the participants wrote the reports by themselves.

Second, a number of the Year 2 participants had the experience of writing a report in Year 1 and therefore many have felt more at ease with the writing process. However, it should be noted that only 3 (37.5%) of the Year 2 participants had the Year 1 experience. Therefore, this second possibility can not by itself account for the improved ratings the writing process received in Year 2.

2. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids? Comments/suggestions:

Six (75.0%) respondent thought that writing the final school reports was "very useful" in helping them make connections between the material/content present in the study group sessions and what they did with their students. One (12.5%) participant thought that report writing was "somewhat useful" in helping them to make these connections and 1 (12.5%) did not respond to the question. The comments and/or suggestions made are as follows:

- "I have a much better idea of what I intend to do in Sept. next year."
- "It was extremely useful to tie all things together & to actually see how obtainable your goals & objectives were."

Once again, when Year 1 results were compared to Year 2, it was found that participants in Year 2 were more positive in their ratings. This was likely due to (1) the fact that in Year 1 the survey was administered before most participants had written their reports and (2) that in Year 2 three additional workshop sessions provided specific time for participants to sit down and do their planning. In Year 1, participants had to find their own time in order to plan and write their final reports.

3. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to develop an implementation plan for Year 3 of the Project? Comments/suggestions:

Six (75.0%) stated that writing the final school report was "very useful" in helping them to develop an implementation plan for Year 3, and 2 (25.0%) reported it was "somewhat useful". The comments and/or suggestions made are as follows:

- "I already can visualize a plan, organize and construct assessment that should be done throughout the year."
- "It helped me to decide which evaluation tools were easy to use or which ones were too difficult. Also, it made me see which objectives were specific enough or not."
- "It has made me more aware of the need for precise objectives and the ongoing need for careful documentation of students abilities and work samples."

It is obvious from the above comments that for those participants, the reports had a positive impact on the development of an Implementation Plan for Year 3. A comparison with Year 1 indicated that, again, that Year 2 participants rated the report writing process as more useful than did Year 1 participants. However, once again one must remember that in Year 1 most participants had not written their reports prior to filling out the survey.

4. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the value of the Project to your professional development? Comments/suggestions:

Seven (87.5%) individuals thought writing the final school report was "very useful" in helping them to evaluate the value of the R/WI Project, 1 (12.5%) stated it was "somewhat useful". The following comments and/or suggestions were made:

- "I have a better idea of my strengths and weaknesses and know what I need to work on."
- "It was a very good learning year. Things were spread out to have a chance to absorb material, work with it, record it to see the results and to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the project regarding reading & writing progress of children."
- "It has made me more aware of my students' needs and helps to concentrate on the small steps leading to the larger goal."

As in questions 1-3 above, the responses to this question were positive, and were again more positive than those obtained in Year 1. The report writing process in Year 2 appears to have really helped the participants to identify their own growth. Again, it must be remembered that the caveats mentioned above also apply to this question.

5. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the progress made by the students involved in the Project? Comments/suggestions:

All 8 (100.0%) of the participants who responded to Part B of the survey reported that the writing process was "very useful" in helping them to evaluate the progress made by their students. The comments made by the four participants who responded to the open-ended portion of this question were as follows:

- "It is good to see the proof of progress the students have made this year."
- "All progress becomes clearly recorded and accounted for."

- "Graphing results really made you see their progress."
- "Even though the progress varied to quite a degree, it was gratifying to see that all children made progress and that many skills were developing even though it couldn't be shown in graphs."

The report writing process appears to have played a key role in the participants' ability to identify and document student growth. Also, Year 2 participants found the report writing process to be much more useful than did Year 1 participants. One more, it must be remembered that the caveats mentioned above also apply to this question.

6. What additional assistance could have been provided in Year Two that would have helped you in writing your final school report?

A total of 4 (50.0%) participants responded to this question and provided written comments. The specific comments made by these individuals were:

- "It might have been easier for us to visualize the final data if the graphing and writing of information had been charted after the initial baseline information was gathered."
- "Three days wasn't enough to write the report but I can't see us getting any more days!?"
- "The School Board did provide computer lessons for all interested teachers. This certainly helped in the report writing. But, I still have not developed enough skills to make using a computer for the report an easy task. The three days computer/report assistance were essential. I could have benefited from more."
- "1) Some time spent showing us how to use the computer program to write the report & make use of the charts; time to practice this to familiarize ourselves.
  2) Time to write out/keyboard our initial findings (baseline data) early in the year (Nov. - Dec.)."

From the above comments it can be seen that two main concerns were expressed. First, it would appear that the participants would have liked to have had more time allocated to the report writing process, and second they felt that the process should have begun earlier in the year.

7. Do you have any other comments/concerns you would like to add about writing the final school report?

The following comments or concerns were expressed.

- "Not having the proper program on the computers in the home school computers made things challenging. I've found testing a real challenge in my particular classroom."
- "It's a lot of work!"
- "I appreciated having the group time with your help."
- "Excellent support through process - computers, using graphs & tables. Time given for report writing is very valuable as well as teacher coverage (substitute costs). Thank you! both!! Peer interaction was great!"
- "Writing the final report will be much easier the second year after having had the experience this year!
  Thank you! I enjoyed this course and learned a lot!"

Summary. Based on the information collected form Part B of the Teachers' Survey, it can be concluded that the addition of the three workshop sessions on report writing provided a valuable experience for Project participants. For the most part those members who took part in the three day workshop thought the following:

1. the University staff members were helpful in assisting them with the report writing process;
2. the report writing process helped them to make connections between study group material and classroom practice;
3. writing the final report helped them to develop an implementation plan for Year 3 of the Project;
4. final report writing helped them to evaluate the value of the Project to their professional development;
5. writing the final report helped them to evaluate student progress;
6. when compared to Year 1, the report writing process was rated far more positively in Year 2; and,
7. the three additional sessions appear to have provided participants with the report writing support that Year 1 participants felt was missing.

Conclusions and Recommendations

We believe that building relationships between public schools and universities is difficult, but it is worth the effort. It is quite likely a very necessary process. The two institutions working together on an ongoing basis results in improved practice at both the school and

university levels. Effective change does not occur through mandates from the central office or higher administration. It results from building- and department-level initiatives by dedicated professionals.

On the basis of the results of the teacher surveys, it was concluded that though there were some minor problems in the Project, overall *it was a success*. Not only was the Project successfully continued in the original Grade 1 classrooms, but it was also successfully expanded into Grade 2 classrooms. The comments from the participating teachers were generally, very positive. *The goals and objectives of the Project have been met.*

Recommendations.

1. **On the basis of the results of the teacher survey, the White Horse Plain School Division No. 20 should encourage and support the continuation of the R/WI Project within the three funded schools and the two non-funded schools.**

2. **Given the teachers' perceptions concerning the success of the R/WI Project in the funded and non-funded schools, the White Horse Plain School Division No. 20 and Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training should encourage and support its expansion into additional schools.**

Meetings

During the second year of the Project, study group meetings were *viewed as well organized, valuable, worthwhile and/or helpful*. The collaborative approach was seen as being of particular value. All but one of the participants were "very satisfied" with the opportunities they had for input into the meeting agendas. The participants also felt *that their suggestions were given very adequate consideration*. The location of the meetings, at St. Francois Xavier School, was thought to be convenient for the majority of participants. Finally, reducing the full-day meetings to half-days and increasing the number of school visits in Year 2 was rated by the participants as a success.

Recommendations.

3. **Study group meetings were an important aspect of the Project and should be continued for the new members that are bought on board.**

Given the success of the half-day meetings, it is recommended that they be continued.

4. **Study group sessions should continue in their present format.**

5. **In Year 3 each site should hold study group meetings that include the original Project participants and the extension teachers.**

6. **During Year 3 there should be a small number of meetings that bring together the participants from each site. The main purpose of such meetings would be to network for sharing and support.**

Materials and Readings

Survey data showed that the participants that the *readings were of high quality, provided useful new information* and *helped them to bring into focus already known information*. They also thought that the *follow up provided by the University staff members was very adequate*. An overwhelming number of the respondents stated that *they were able to suggest materials/readings for use in the group*. The one suggestion was that four of the participants felt that they could handle a "bit more" information than was presented to them in the form of materials and readings.

Site Visits

Site visits were rated as either *equal in importance* to other components of the Project or the *most important component*. The participants who at the end of Year 1 had requested an increase in the number of site visitations were happy with the changes that occurred in Year 2 to increase those visits. The participants also stated that these visits were conducted in *a non threatening way* and *helped bridge the gap between theory and practice*. One common suggestion was that participants should have their questions and/or what they want the University staff to observe written down prior to the visit.

Recommendations.

7. **Site visits should continue to be an integral part of the Project and that the number of visits established for Year 2 remain the same for Year 3.**

Project Expectations

In most instances the Project *met participant expectations* and most indicated that it was *similar to what they expected* it to be. The majority of the respondents stated that the *Project was useful to them* and that they were *confident it would continue to meet their expectations*. The most significant finding from this section of the survey was that Year 2 participants were more likely than Year 1 participants to have said that they found the Project to be useful to them. Since Year 2 included the Year 1 participants, it might be concluded that the Project's perceived usefulness increased as they became more confident in their newly developed skills.

While four of the respondents noted that they had *spent more time on the Project than expected*, three felt they had *spent less time than expected* and three felt that they had *spent about what they had expected to spend*.

The most serious concern expressed in this section of the survey was that some participants *did not think that they had been adequately familiarized with Project goals prior to its implementation*. However, those who expressed this concern were more likely to have been new to R/WI in Year 2.

Recommendations.

8. When new members enter the Project, school administrators and University staff should do a more thorough job in familiarizing them with the Project format and goals, and in the role participants are expected to play.

Support for the Project

The participants were *very satisfied with the support provided by the University staff members*. The majority indicated that the *support provided by their school administrator was very good*. However, a *few* respondents noted that they would like to see communications between themselves and the school's administrator improve.

The Report Writing Process

As was stated earlier, the report writing support was provided through a three day workshop format. In order to assess the support provided, Part B of the Teachers' Survey was distributed on 19 May 1994 (see Appendix B for a copy of the survey). Nine of the 11 participants took part in the workshops and were given surveys to complete.

Overall, Project participants thought that the *University staff provided useful assistance during the report writing process*. The *reports were perceived as helping them to make connections between theory and practice, develop a plan for Year 3, evaluate the value of the Project, and make judgments about student progress*. The results also indicated that the participants were more positive in their comments about the report writing process in Year 2 than was the case in Year 1. This was likely due to (1) the fact that in Year 1 the survey was administered before most participants had written their reports and (2) that in Year 2 three additional workshop sessions provided specific time for participants to sit down and do their planning.

Recommendations.

9. **Implementation Plans and Student Outcome Reports should continue to be written, and the teacher participants should be responsible for their production.**

10. **University staff should continue to provide support for the report writing process and that the number of sessions established for Year 2 remain the same for Year 3.**

11. **The report writing process should be initiated sooner in the year with participants beginning the data recording stage as soon as they have completed collecting their baseline data.**

Project Usefulness and Final Comments

A large percentage of the participants stated that they had *learned a number of new skills* and *were already using these in their classrooms*. It was *noteworthy* that the *most often specified new skills* were related to *utilization of different teaching strategies* and *assessing student progress*.

A *majority* of the respondents indicated that the *Project had resulted in a number of positive changes in their students' performance*. However, first year participants were more likely to feel that their students had made positive gains as a result of the Project than were Participants who have been in the Project for two years. Given the general positive comments about the Project by second year participants, we do not know why this difference was found.

Recommendations.

12. The Project should continue to emphasize teacher specification of student performance objectives and teacher assessment of student outcomes.

Concluding Remarks

Responses to the Teacher Survey correspond very closely with the nine conditions McGowan (1990) identified as necessary for effective collaboration.[1] First, collaboration takes time and the willingness to expend the necessary time. We believe that the participants exhibited this willingness throughout Year 1, and their attendance at meetings and their report writing attest to this fact.

Second, the individuals involved in the collaboration must see benefits for their institutions and themselves. Teacher perceptions about establishing specific performance objectives and assessing student outcomes highlight the importance of seeing benefits. In addition, the collaborative effort must address the real needs of all those involved. Participant empowerment assures that such issues are addressed.

Third, the formal leadership of the involved institutions must be supportive. The support the of administration should articulated publicly. Also, they need to understand the issues being studied and encourage their staff to participate. The survey and our experience indicated that the White Horse Plan School Division No. 20 administration was publicly supportive of

[1] McGowan, Thomas M. "Reflections of an Experienced Collaborator." in *Collaboration: Building Common Agendas*, edited by Henrietta Schwartz. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1990.

the Project and encouraged staff participation. The spending of Division funds to allow additional staff to participate exemplifies such support.

Fourth, a core group should be responsible for planning and setting priorities. The Management Committee, which was composed of teacher participants, school administrators, Student Support Branch consultants and University staff, served this purpose. Even though this was a new role for some of the participants, their comments indicated they appreciated the planning and decisions making opportunities this committee and the study group afforded them.

Five, mutual respect is essential for those engaged in a successful collaborative activity. Survey comments and our observations indicated that this collegiality was established. All participants (i.e., school and university) were open to learn from each other. We believe that all of us felt we had valuable ideas to contribute and that our colleagues accepted them as such.

Six, collaboration needs direction. The participants must know why they are there and have a clear sense of what they would like to accomplish. It was obvious that the establishment of their own specific student performance objectives was important for the participants. It was equally important to them that the Project goals and format be clearly communicated. This, however, seemed to be a Project weakness.

Seven, at some point early in the collaboration, the group needs to set up an operational structure. This was done, but survey comments indicated that some participants felt setting this structure up took time from other endeavors. Regardless, some flexible rules or operating procedures need to be established so that expectations are clear for all involved. The fact that the participants were able to judge if expectations were being met indicates that the operational structure was successful.

Eight, a collaborative group should have one or more process models to guide its deliberations. We believe that the process models used in the group developed naturally rather than being pre-planned. The entry level model was one that might be characterized as a sharing model that provided a non threatening starting point.

Nine, a critical condition for successful collaboration is the willingness to be flexible. The participants in the R/WI exemplified such willingness. They always attempted to understand the perspectives of others and were willing to think about new ways of doing things.

The form of collaboration used in the R/WI Project is not quickly or easily established. It depends on building mutual understandings, establishing trust, creating a structure for implementing decisions, and making a serious commitment over an extended period of time. Projects of this sort require that the participants overlook differences and work together toward mutual goals. We believe that the R/WI participants exhibited the open communication, trust, honesty and the long-term commitment required of those committed to making productive change in classrooms.

Appendix A

Teacher Survey And Results For Part A

READING/WRITING IMMERSION: A DECISION MAKING LITERACY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

TEACHER SURVEY

PART A

April 14, 1994

One of the conditions of the funding for this Project is that it be evaluated. The purpose of this survey is to collect information from the participants in order to provide evaluative information to the funder and also to provide information that will assist in making improvements, if needed, to the Project. As previously discussed with you, **all responses will be kept completely confidential! Therefore, do not include your name anywhere on this survey!**

Since the sessions on report writing will not take place until May 5, 10 and 19, we have decided to divide the survey into two parts. Part A includes questions related to the Group Sessions and School Visits. Part B will include questions related to the Report Writing Sessions. Dividing the survey into two Parts will not only assist us in getting our year end report completed on time, but it should also make it easier for participants to respond. That is, instead of having to complete one rather long survey, the work has been divided into two shorter components. Part B will be handed out to participants who take part in the report writing sessions on May 19, 1994.

Please complete and return this survey in the envelop provided. In order to allow us adequate time to analyze the results, please mail the survey back to us by **Friday, April 29, 1994**. After the data has been compiled, it will be shared with you at one of our meetings.

Please read each question carefully. For each question, find the response which best represents your opinion and **circle it**. If you need more space for writing in comments/suggestions, use the back of the page. If you have any questions concerning the survey, we will be more than happy to answer them (phone Paul at 474-8712). We would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to assist us in the very important task of evaluating the Reading/Writing Immersion Project.

Gerry Bravi

Paul Madak

A. The school I work in is

9 (81.8%)	1.)	an official member of the Project.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	an unofficial member of the Project.

B. This is my

5 (45.5%)	1.)	first year in the Project.
6 (54.5%)	2.)	second year in the Project.

I. MEETINGS

1. The meetings for the Reading/Writing Immersion Program have been held at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School. How do you feel about this location?

8 (72.7%)	1.)	the location is fine.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	the location is too far from my home school.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	it does not matter to me where the meetings are held.

2. Rate the room in which the meetings have been held in by circling the most appropriate response.

	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor
a.) room is clean	**100.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
b.) room is well lighted	**100.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
c.) size of the room is adequate	**90.9%**	**9.1%**	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
d.) temperature of room is comfortable	**36.4%**	**45.5%**	**18.2%**	**0.0%**

3. In your opinion, how would you rate the overall organization of the meetings held so far?

6 (54.5%)	1.)	meetings have been very well organized.
4 (36.4%)	2.)	meetings have been well organized.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	meetings have been poorly organized.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	meetings have been very poorly organized.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- Too much repetition and off task.
- I wish more people would have brought work samples and ideas to share. Even when we were told to, people didn't. Maybe if it was made mandatory there would be a greater effort put forth.
- Sometimes, too much time was spent on one area, such as the Miscue Analysis which, I feel, could have been discussed in a much shorter time.
- not always ended up with learning of specific but were still important info. provided.

4. Given that one of the main goals of this Project is that a collaborative approach be utilized, how satisfied are you with the opportunities you have had with regards to input into the agendas of the meetings?

10 (90.9%)	1.) very satisfied.
0 (0.0%)	2.) somewhat satisfied.
1 (9.1%)	3.) somewhat dissatisfied.
0 (0.0%)	4.) not at all satisfied.

Comments/suggestions for improvements.

- Nothing new. Too much time taken up with diagnostic and not enough time with strategies. Writing was supposed to be our focus.

5. When you have made suggestions with regards to the meeting agendas, did you feel that your suggestions were given adequate consideration?

8 (72.7%)	1.) very adequate consideration.
2 (18.2%)	2.) adequate consideration.
1 (9.1%)	3.) were considered, but not adequately.
0 (0.0%)	4.) were not considered at all.

Comments/suggestions.

6. Based on suggestions received at the end of Year One, this year's group meetings were a half-day long rather than a full-day and more time was given to school visits. Overall, how would you rate this change?

9 (81.8%)	1.) I liked the half-day meetings.
0 (0.0%)	2.) I did not like the half-day meetings.
2 (18.2%)	N/A

Comments/suggestions

- I can't compare the two, because I wasn't here last year. But I would think that half day sessions and more time to on site visits would be better if you are receiving visits.
- The school allowed us to work on the project for the second-half. Therefore, suggestions, ideas, or resources could be investigated immediately -- very beneficial. Thanks.
- I appreciated the school visits.
- We waste too much time on the road. The other 1/2 day is not great for anything.
- I found the whole-day meetings were too long to sustain my attention.
- The half day was good for material presentation but in my situation because of distance the other half day was basically wasted.

II. MATERIALS/READINGS

7. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the reading and other professional materials that have been provided to you in Year Two?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	very high quality.
5 (45.5%)	2.)	high quality.
0 (0.0%)	3.)	poor quality.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	very poor quality.
1 (9.1%)		Missing.

Comments/suggestions.

- What reading materials? There was nothing specifically new this year. The Pippin Books were interesting reading, but nothing new and we never really discussed the info.
- Not made aware of what is available at the school.

8. Do you feel that the reading and other professional materials provided to you during Year Two have presented:

1 (9.1%)	1.)	mostly new information.
9 (81.8%)	2.)	a half-and-half mixture of new and old information.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	mostly old information that I already knew.

9. Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of the reading and other professional materials provided to you in Year Two?

9 (81.8%)	1.) very useful.
1 (9.1%)	2.) somewhat useful.
1 (9.1%)	3.) not very useful.
0 (.0%)	4.) not at all useful.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- No new strategies provided.
- After being in it for a year, I was able to understand & compliment theories/materials with a much improved confidence.
- We need more time to absorb & time to read.
- I would like more discussion and comments about professional materials we have read.

10. How would you rate the amount of information that has been provided to you in Year Two?

0 (0.0%)	1.) far too much material.
1 (9.1%)	2.) just a little too much material to be read in one week.
5 (45.5%)	3.) the right amount.
4 (36.4%)	4.) could have dealt with a little more material each week.
1 (9.1%)	5.) far too little in the way of materials/readings were provided.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- We, I thought, were to concentrate on writing this year.
- It is difficult to answer. Some weeks there was a fairly large amount of reading material. At other times there was a minimal amount to read or none at all.

11. How adequate was the University Staff follow-up to the reading and other professional materials (i.e., willingness to discuss/explain ideas presented in the materials/readings)?

9 (81.8%)	1.) very adequate.
1 (9.1%)	2.) adequate.
0 (0.0%)	3.) somewhat adequate.
1 (9.1%)	4.) not at all adequate.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- Perhaps I was not "present", but I don't remember any assigned readings.
- Impressive willingness to give assistance.

12. Do you feel that the reading and other professional materials given to you in Year Two covered the topic areas that you thought would be covered when you started the Program in September 1993?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	yes, very few surprises.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	yes, but there were a number of areas I did not expect to be covered.
2 (18.2%)	3.)	no, there were a lot of areas covered that I did not expect.
2 (18.2%)		Missing.

- Personally I thought too much time was spent on miscues; but it was the decision of the majority. I found the review beneficial.
- Did not know what to expect.
- Because I wasn't part of the Project the year before I didn't know what to expect.

13. Were there topic areas you would have liked to have received materials on, but did not?

6 (54.5%)	1.)	yes.
5 (45.5%)	2.)	no.

If yes, what were those topic areas?

- More and different strategies to help "at-risk kids". I thought our focus was to be writing, not reading miscue analysis.
- Specific strategies to meet goals, because I did not have the advantage of on-site visits. The testing ideas we were given were excellent, but strategies to solve problems were probably part of the on-site visits.
- I'm anticipating receiving the student - led conference materials.
- Perhaps some new teaching strategies.
- I would have liked more material on teaching different reading strategies and also information on how to detect a child's best learning style.
- But not because there was any wasted time.
- I would have liked more specific strategies to try and meet certain needs.

14. Given that this is a collaborative Project, did you feel that you could suggest reading and other professional materials for the group?

9 (81.8%)	1.)	yes.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	no.

Comments/suggestions

- As a newcomer, I was not always sure of the group direction. And as a first year teacher I didn't have a lot of background information and experience to suggest. This was more of a learning rather than a collaborative experience for me.
- However, I don't think it would have the breadth and range that Drs. Bravi & Madak have consistently brought to the meetings.
- From the beginning I wasn't sure of our direction. This is probably because I was new this year as well as being a first year teacher.

III. SCHOOL VISITS

15. How helpful were observations or suggestions that were made during the school visits?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	very useful.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	3.)	not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	not at all useful.
3 (27.3%)		Does not apply to my situation.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- I don't have a classroom. So I did not answer #15 - 19.
- Teacher be freed to debrief; without handling the class at the same time. Written questions & objectives & strategies given to Dr. B. prior to lesson -- focus on these during debriefing.
- My room was not visited per se as mine was not the target group.
- As of now I haven't been visited at my school.

16. How helpful were the school visits in assisting you to make connections between the materials/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	very useful.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	3.)	not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	not at all useful.
3 (27.3%)		Does not apply to my situation.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- But at times I'm still very confused.

17. Overall, when comparing all of the components of the Reading/Writing Immersion Project (i.e., sessions at the St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and school visits) during Year Two, how important were the school visits made by Gerry and Paul?

3 (27.3%)	1.)	the most important component.
4 (36.4%)	2.)	equal in importance to the other two components.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	not as important as the other two components.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	not at all important.
3 (27.3%)		Does not apply to my situation.

Comments/suggestions:

- Since I was in the Project unofficially in Year One, I regarded these visits as an opportunity to have Dr. B. observe me "in-action". This then would help me know if I had indeed implemented the theory appropriately, effectively & efficiently.

- You are able to be more specific regarding your own students.

18. Compared to Year One, do you feel that the increase in the number of school visits was a good decision?

3 (27.3%)	1.)	Do not know, I was not part of the Project last year.
5 (45.5%)	2.)	Yes.
0 (0.0%)	3.)	No.
3 (27.3%)		Does not apply to my situation.

Comments/suggestions:

- I was a part of Year One, but did not have school visits.

- I feel it is important for those who are in the project for their first year.

19. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add about the school visits?

- I would like to see all Project members in one school visited at one time. % of time with each teacher could vary. During debriefing all teachers would benefit from "good" points, "improvements" as well as adding other insights to the strategies, students & become aware of strength of a student that could be their's in another year.

- I was very comfortable with the school visits. They were done in a very non-threatening way. Never did I feel that my teaching methods were being criticized or evaluated.

- Make it <u>dengeur</u> that teacher's present in written form exactly what it is <u>they</u> ask Drs. Bravi & Madak to observe, assist & comment , in advance.

IV. PROJECT EXPECTATIONS

20. At this point in time, is the Project:

0 (0.0%)	1.) exactly what you thought it would be.
7 (63.6%)	2.) very close to what you thought it would be.
2 (18.2%)	3.) somewhat close to what you thought it would be.
2 (18.2%)	4.) not at all what you thought it to be.

If not what you thought, how is it different?

- I had no information on the course before I started, other than it would be very useful for me to take. (and it was extremely useful!)
- It is not different, I just wasn't sure what to expect.

21. Is the Project turning out to be as useful to you as you thought it would be?

7 (63.6%)	1.) yes, very useful.
3 (27.3%)	2.) yes, somewhat useful.
1 (9.1%)	3.) no, not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.) no, not at all useful.

Comments/suggestions for improvements.

- Need more strategies, new techniques in working with "at-risk students."
- It has made me very aware of my objectives, how I go about to achieve them and making my results or achievements measurable.

22. At this point, how confident are you that your expectations for the Project will be reached?

3 (27.3%)	1.) very confident.
5 (45.5%)	2.) somewhat confident.
1 (9.1%)	3.) not very confident.
0 (0.0%)	4.) not at all confident.
2 (18.2%)	Missing.

Why or why not?

- Strategies, strategies, strategies, please.
- The expectation that this course would be useful was definitely reached. But, my own goals for my students, in a lot of tests won't be reached -- Too many goals, too little class time, trying to work in all educational aspects with limited resources including lack of experience.
- my job may change. Division pull out backing, I am concerned for Year Four. How supportive is division? Will they expect this all to take place on teachers' own time or will they still devote paid time somewhat?
- The Project has helped me become specific with goals and objectives.
- My class is too great a load for any 1 teacher - I often feel somewhat overwhelmed.
- There were a lot of outside interferences that may have hampered the results.
- I didn't have any definite expectations for the Project. What I decided on for my specific expectations for my students in the Project I am confident we strived hard to reach. That is showing growth.

23. The time I spent on the Project this year was:

1 (9.1%)	1.) much more than I expected.
4 (36.4%)	2.) a bit more than I expected.
3 (27.3%)	3.) just what I expected.
3 (27.3%)	4.) a bit less than I expected.
0 (0.0%)	5.) a lot less than I expected.

24. Do you have any additional comments/concerns/suggestions to make regarding the amount of time taken up by this Project in Year Two?

- I was very interested and just wanted to savor all I could.

V. SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

25. In your opinion, how would you rate the University Staff in the areas listed below?

	Always	Sometimes	Never
a.) they are approachable	**90.9%**	**9.1%**	**0.0%**
b.) they value my opinions	**81.8%**	**18.2%**	**0.0%**

	Always	Sometimes	Never
c.) they treated me as a professional	**90.9%**	**9.1%**	**0.0%**
d.) they were willing to answer all my questions	**90.9%**	**9.1%**	**0.0%**
e.) they empathize with the problems I have to deal with in the classroom	**90.9%**	**9.1%**	**0.0%**
f.) they suggest rather than dictate or criticize	**81.8%**	**18.2%**	**0.0%**
g.) they actively look for and encourage my input	**72.7%**	**27.3%**	**0.0%**
h.) they help me feel more confident about what I do in the classroom	**72.7%**	**27.3%**	**0.0%**
i.) they make suggestions that are useful to me	**72.7%**	**27.3%**	**0.0%**
j.) they try to make the Project challenging	**63.6%**	**36.4%**	**0.0%**

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

- They try to make the Project challenging in a good way.

26. In your opinion, how would you rate the support being provided to this Program from your school's administrator(s)?

9 (81.8%)	1.) very good.
2 (18.2%)	2.) good.
0 (0.0%)	3.) poor.
0 (0.0%)	4.) very poor.

Comments/suggestions for improvements.

- At times I wonder how much they actually know about what is going on. Do they have a copy of the goals, do they know/observe the teacher's implementation of them? If at times we try 1 method only to throw it out & re-do it a different way do they understand or criticize?

- I don't feel there was enough communication between the principal and the classroom teacher. It seemed that budget and other administrative issues were only discussed with the participating resource teacher. Support from the administrator was good, however, I question whether he was truly interested in the project. I was never asked any questions, etc.

- There was insufficient carry over from the previous personnel in our school (i.e., teacher & resource involved at our school).
- In our situation we did not see the carry over that we should have had from school.

VI. PROGRAM USEFULNESS AND FINAL COMMENTS

27. Based on your experiences with the Project, how would your rate the following items?

a.) I find that the information presented so far has been:

8 (72.7%)	1.) very useful.
2 (18.2%)	2.) useful.
1 (9.1%)	3.) somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.) not at all useful.

b.) I find that I am already trying out some of the ideas/techniques in my classroom.

11 (100.0%)	1.) yes.
0 (0.0%)	2.) no.

c.) I find that I have already adopted some of the ideas/techniques as part of what I do in my classroom.

11 (100.0%)	1.) yes.
0 (0.0%)	2.) no.

d.) Based on your experiences thus far, what do you feel is the probability that you will make changes to what you do in the classroom?

8 (72.7%)	1.) I am 100% certain I will make changes.
3 (27.3%)	2.) I am 85% certain I will make changes.
0 (0.0%)	3.) I am 50% certain I will make changes.
0 (0.0%)	4.) I am 25% certain I will make changes.
0 (0.0%)	5.) I am 100% certain that I will not make changes.

- Many changes have already been implemented.

e.) Based on your experiences thus far, have you seen positive changes in the performance of your students that are a direct result of this Project?

8 (72.7%)	1.) yes, I have noticed many positive changes.
3 (27.3%)	2.) yes, I have noticed a few positive changes.
0 (0.0%)	3.) no, I have not noticed any positive changes.
0 (0.0%)	4.) I do not know.

1.) Do you feel that this Project has helped you to improve your teaching skills?

10 (90.9%) 1.) yes
1 (9.1%) 2.) no

Comments:

- Those changes that I have made are from last year's time, not from this year.
- Just moved down to Primary -- given this appointment is much better than taking standard university courses to gain experience & knowledge in this area.
- It has helped me to decide how & to what minimal level I would like at-risk students in my class, to attain.
- But a person has to want to change and work hard at it.

28. Name/describe some changes that you have made in your classroom during Year Two that are a direct result of this Project.

- I don't have a classroom.
- Teaching toward more specific goals and letting the students know the goals we are trying to achieve. Basic goals are shared. We have a direction to go in to get where we want to be. I have used specific class motivations, like charting their growth visually. I have given them ownership of some of the goals, (reading & Dolch words) which they enjoy. To get a better understanding of stories, we have participated in involvement in play time, puppet shows and performing plays, and in re-telling.
- More writing -- a wider range of writing classes. Attempting to tie parents into the equation of their child. i.e., Reading logs, writing letters, more published stories.
- 1. Objective writing. I have written objectives in place that help me to focus my teaching on specific skills, etc.

  2. Testing & data collection. This has become an ongoing thing for me. I am trying to be more organized in my collection of data.

  3. Analyzing data. I am able to identify students having difficulty in a certain area, and make quicker decisions as to how to re-teach that skill.

  4. Peer teaching. I have found that I tend to let students explain their thought processes to each other more so now.
- Objectives for special needs students (short and long-term).

- I was able to purchase more library books for the students and have re-arranged my classroom library to make books more accessible to the students. This has encouraged the home reading program also.

- More emphasis has been put on reading & testing the reading. I have become a better evaluator - my evaluation tools & skills have improved - data is more reliable & not so subjective - more imperical evidence has been gathered.

- 1) Working more with small groups.

  2) Targeting specific areas of weakness within those groups.

  3) Using different methods to establish baselines.

  4) Do more reading miscue analysis.

  5) More oral retelling of stories.

  6) Using information from #'s 4 & 5 to make improvements in reading.

- Evaluate and recorded results much more efficiently.

  used assessment as on going process.

  did more 1 on 1 teaching again.

  I used more behavioral objectives to see my other goals met.

- Although I was not a part of year one, the project helped me with setting up my evaluation process.

29. If you could change one thing about the Project, what would it be?

- I would like more time spent on learning <u>new</u> strategies to help students with the reading/writing process. A re-hash of the previous year's info. is not a valid use of my time.

- I think that on-site visits are very important because each class has its own unique situations that can't be dealt with in the group. It would be nice if the time and money could be found for everyone to benefit from this.

- increased time for both theory and the practical that is observed. Observed in this manner (non-authority expert - - re: teacher evaluation within division) you feel free to attempt things that have/are problem areas. You don't have to "set-up" the situation so it works well. More of this is a good way to expand your strengths & minimize weakness.

- I would change the role of the resource teachers. I'm not even sure what their job is. Taking minutes at meetings? Going to the management meetings? I don't find them helpful in my classroom situation. I've learned to deal with learning problems on my own.

- Determine a Divisional Co-ordinator for the Project (not necessarily an administrator).
- The distance we need to travel should be equalized for all.
- Nothing.
- I would like to o more 'hands-on' activities at the workshops. For example, let's do a reading miscue or role play a 'child led conference'.
- I would just love to send an entire year just studying the various aspects of reading and become more proficient in teaching strategies.
- I would like to see the on site visits take place first. Discuss specific strategies, then be able to discuss with the group what you did and how it went.

30. Given what has taken place between the start of the Project and now, do you have any suggestions that you have not already made earlier in this survey for improving the Reading/Writing Immersion Project? If so, what are they?

- I feel that some teachers involved with the project felt or are still feeling like they were "forced" into participating. I am guessing that this is why some people don't bring work samples or discuss their students at the meetings.

  I don't think that the administrators were very open about this project from the beginning. Maybe these feelings could have been avoided if the teachers had been given a chance to decide for themselves whether they would participate or not.
- There should be time for teachers to observe and consult with one another in classroom settings.
- None.
- None!

31. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add, but haven't been asked?

- I'd like to thank the Division for allowing myself & others to benefit from this Project in addition to the Provincially funded teachers.
- No!

THANK YOU!

Appendix B

Teacher Survey And Results For Part B

READING/WRITING IMMERSION: A DECISION MAKING LITERACY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

TEACHER SURVEY

PART B

May 19, 1994

One of the conditions of the funding for this Project is that it be evaluated. The purpose of this survey is to collect information from the participants in order to provide evaluative information to the funder and also to provide information that will assist in making improvements, if needed, to the Project. As previously discussed with you, **all responses will be kept completely confidential! Therefore, do not include your name anywhere on this survey!**

As was explained in the first survey, since the sessions on report writing did not take place until May 5, 10 and 19, we decided to divide the survey into two parts. Part A included questions related to the Group Sessions and School Visits. Part B includes questions related to the Report Writing Sessions.

Please complete and return this survey in the envelop provided. In order to allow us adequate time to analyze the results, please mail the survey back to us by **Friday, May 27, 1994**. After the data has been compiled, it will be shared with you at one of our meetings.

Please read each question carefully. For each question, find the response which best represents your opinion and **circle it**. If you need more space for writing in comments/suggestions, use the back of the page. If you have any questions concerning the survey, we will be more than happy to answer them (phone Paul at 474-8712). We would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to assist us in the very important task of evaluating the Reading/Writing Immersion Project.

Gerry Bravi

Paul Madak

A. The school I work in is

6 (75.0%)	1.)	an official member of the Project.
2 (25.0%)	2.)	an unofficial member of the Project.

B. This is my

5 (62.5%)	1.)	first year in the Project.
3 (37.5%)	2.)	second year in the Project.

WRITING PROCESS

1. How helpful were the university staff in assisting you in writing your final school report?

8 (100.0%)	1.)	very helpful.
0 (0.0%)	2.)	somewhat helpful.
0 (0.0%)	3.)	not very helpful.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	not at all helpful.

Comments/suggestions:

- It was well guided & well followed.
- The outline was very helpful. Having Paul at the school for all three days was also very helpful.

2. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids?

6 (75.0%)	1.)	very useful.
1 (12.5%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	3.)	not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.)	not at all useful.
1 (12.5%)		Did not respond to the question.

Comments/suggestions:

- I have a much better idea of what I intend to do in Sept. next year.
- It was extremely useful to tie all things together & to actually see how obtainable your goals & objectives were.

3. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to develop an implementation plan for Year 3 of the Project?

6 (75.0%)	1.) very useful.
2 (25.0%)	2.) somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	3.) not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.) not at all useful.

Comments/suggestions:

- I already can visualize a plan, organize and construct assessment that should be done throughout the year.
- It helped me to decide which evaluation tools were easy to use or which ones were too difficult. Also, it made me see which objectives were specific enough or not.
- It has made me more aware of the need for precise objectives and the ongoing need for careful documentation of students abilities and work samples.

4. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the value of the Project to your professional development?

7 (87.5%)	1.) very useful.
1 (12.5%)	2.) somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	3.) not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.) not at all useful.

Comments/suggestions:

- I have a better idea of my strengths and weaknesses and know what I need to work on.
- It was a very good learning year. Things were spread out to have a chance to absorb material, work with it, record it to see the results and to be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the project regarding reading & writing progress of children.
- It has made me more aware of my students' needs and helps to concentrate on the small steps leading to the larger goal.

5. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the progress made by the students involved in the Project?

8 (100.0%)	1.) very useful.
0 (0.0%)	2.) somewhat useful.
0 (0.0%)	3.) not very useful.
0 (0.0%)	4.) not at all useful.

Comments/suggestions:

- It is good to see the proof of progress the students have made this year.
- All progress becomes clearly recorded and accounted for.
- Graphing results really made you see their progress.
- Even though the progress varied to quite a degree, it was gratifying to see that all children made progress and that many skills were developing even though it couldn't be shown in graphs.

6. What additional assistance could have been provided in Year Two that would have helped you in writing your final school report?

- It might have been easier for us to visualize the final data if the graphing and writing of information had been charted after the initial baseline information was gathered.
- Three days wasn't enough to write the report but I can't see us getting any more days!?
- The School Board did provide computer lessons for all interested teachers. This certainly helped in the report writing. But, I still have not developed enough skills to make using a computer for the report an easy task. The three days computer/report assistance were essential. I could have benefited from more.
- 1) Some time spent showing us how to use the computer program to write the report & make use of the charts; time to practice this to familiarize ourselves.

  2) Time to write out/keyboard our initial findings (baseline data) early in the year (Nov. - Dec.).

7. Do you have any other comments/concerns you would like to add about writing the final school report?

- Not having the proper program on the computers in the home school computers made things challenging. I've found testing a real challenge in my particular classroom.
- It's a lot of work!
- I appreciated having the group time with your help.
- Excellent support through process - computers, using graphs & tables. Time given for report writing is very valuable as well as teacher coverage (substitute costs). Thank you! both!! Peer interaction was great!

- Writing the final report will be much easier the second year after having had the experience this year!

Thank you! I enjoyed this course and learned a lot!

THANK YOU!